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Arthur Stanley, the pupil, wrote the life of Dr. Arnold, his teacher; and school-teaching owes no little of its new attractiveness, to that delightful book. In contrast with these are placed two, written by authors far removed from their subjects: the noble biography of Lord Laurence, by Bosworth Smith, the quiet schoolmaster of Harrow; and Professor Masson's "Life of John Milton."

3. The readers of biographies. The reader must bring to his reading, a true life of his own. The object is not imitation, but inspiration. The danger is lest he who reads shall lose himself, shall come to be, not himself, but the feeble repetition of some other man. Read for light and intensity, for sympathy and breadth. The effect on personal character is great. No kind of book helps us so much as a good biography. The supreme blessing of biography is that it is always bathing the special in the universal, and so renewing its vitality and freshness.

O. B. R.

Literature Primers, Chaucer. By ALFRED W. POLLARD, M. A.
Macmillan & Co.: London and New York. pp. 142.

This is an excellent introduction to the study of one of the most delightful of English poets. It ranks favorably with Dowden's "Shakspeare Primer," Jebb's "Greek Literature," and Stopford Brooke's "Primer of English Literature" in thoroughness and sanity of criticism, although it lacks the charm of style which characterizes Mr. Brooke's Primer. It is encouraging to read in confirmation of Matthew Arnold's prophecy: "Today Chaucer has more readers and more lovers than at any previous time and every year increases their number." The author anticipates the criticism that this little book is not "written quite so simply as might be wished" on account of the many Chaucerian controversies which are not dead yet.

A useful hint is found for beginners in Chaucer: "The number of words now obsolete in the prologue to the 'Canterbury Tales' is unusually high, and for this reason it should not be read the first among Chaucer's poems; nevertheless it usually is read first." Another helpful suggestion is the reference to "a useful little book by Mr. Saunders, entitled 'Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.'" Of this interesting as well as useful, but not especially little, book a new and revised edition has just been issued.

Mr. Pollard gives Chaucer high rank as an artist: "As an artist, a master of his craft, Chaucer has no superior; for sustained beauty, for continuous charm, his verse has never been surpassed. Alone among English poets he possesses the art of narration in its perfection."

With the help of Pollard's Primer and "Saunders' Canterbury Tales," the charm of this art may well win its way into a course of instruction in English literature in our best secondary schools. For the teacher at least Chaucer need no longer stand a stranger at the door. "He will be read," says Matthew Arnold, "as time goes on, far more generally than he is read now. His language is a cause of difficulty for us; but so also, and I think in quite as great a degree, is the language of Burns. In Chaucer's case, as in that of Burns, it is a difficulty to be unhesitatingly accepted and overcome." While Mr. Pollard warns the beginner away from the Prologue for his first choice in the study of "this most human, most lovable of English poets," he says of the tales of the "Pardoner," "Nun's Priest," and "Canon's Yeomen," that "all three should be read as in the poet's best style." In them "his mastery is hardly less, while his plots are far happier" than in the other "tales of the common folk." This is the best brief introduction which we have met to an acquaintance with the poet whom Mr. Brooke calls "the first English artist," and whose mastery of his craft Mr. Pollard thinks has hardly been surpassed by the last English artist, Lord Tennyson himself.

O. B. Rhodes

The Classic Myths in English Literature. Based chiefly on Bulfinch's "Age of Fable." By CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY, Professor of the English Language and Literature in the University of California. pp. xxxviii+539. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1893.

This is our old favorite, Bulfinch's "Age of Fable," rewritten and designed as a schoolbook for the systematized presentation and interpretation of the myths that have most influenced English literature. (poetry?) The volume is furnished with one hundred and ten illustrative cuts and seven maps chiefly from other publications of Ginn & Co.

The introduction emphasizes strongly the value and importance of the study of mythology in connection with English poetry. We note a somewhat supercilious tone in speaking of our American educational methods. The "fatuity many of our secondary teachers exercise" who are not myth-intoxicated; "our gabble about methods;" "in our apprehension lest pupils may turn out parrots, we have too often turned them out loons." These may be grave defects, but they will hardly be removed by a systematic study of myths. The insistence on memoriter recitation of the best poems and verses is however entirely just. But one may well doubt whether the best poetry for the young is that which needs so much interpreting. The first three chapters give an excellent *résumé* of the various theories concerning the origin, distribution and preservation of myths. Then follow the classic